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which reveals the conscious motives and purposes that appear to have had a determinative influence.

CARL BECKER.

The History of Statistics, their Development and Progress in Many Countries. Collected and edited by JOHN KOREN. (New York: Macmillan Company, for the American Statistical Association. 1918. Pp. xii, 773. \$7.50.)

THIS is a memorial volume issued to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the American Statistical Association. It opens, therefore, as might be expected, with a history of the association. This very brief narrative by John Koren is largely devoted to telling something of the men who have been prominent in the association and the conspicuous services rendered by each. In general outline, the chief activities of the association are also recorded. In the next chapter, Dr. S. N. D. North discusses the progress of statistics during the last seventy-five years and the outlook for the future. This very broad subject is necessarily covered in a most general way.

The remainder of the volume consists of a series of histories, for various leading countries of the world, of the advancement of each in knowledge of a statistical nature concerning itself. A prominent statistician of each nation, who is or has been closely identified with the statistical work thereof, describes the statistical progress in his own particular country from its earliest recorded beginnings down to the present time.

The extension to different fields of the collection of numerical data is usually traced in considerable detail. The studies are confined to the expansion of statistical information and deal to no noticeable degree with the development of or instruction in statistical method or theory. Although private statistical studies, especially those of early days, are treated to some extent, the great bulk of the space is devoted to the kinds of data collected by various governmental units.

While differing markedly in elaborateness and form, the histories are all written in scholarly and readable style. The history of federal statistics in the United States by Dr. John Cummings is especially to be commended because it gives an apparently well-balanced, critical appraisal of the value of leading types of statistical studies made by our government. In the opinion of the reviewer, the work of many of the other writers might have been made even more valuable to the readers had the authors followed a similar course.

In reading the various histories, one is impressed by the fact that extensiveness of statistical knowledge is largely coincident with progress in civilization and governmental efficiency. In Russia, the elaborateness of the plans made contrasted with the meagreness of the results actually obtained, also the extreme decentralization and incomparability of the

statistics actually gathered, seem to throw some light upon present social and governmental weaknesses in that vast region. While there is much improvement yet to be sought, the United States seems to stand out in favorable contrast to most of the other large nations, both as to the scope covered and as to the systematic way in which statistical work is carried on. Some of the small nations of northwestern Europe seem also to have made most commendable progress in the organization of their statistical studies.

The various authors were asked to suggest improvements which might well be made by their governments in the collection of statistical material. Dr. A. Kauffman of Petrograd believes in allowing to the local governmental units free rein with practically no control from the national government, voicing thus clearly his distrust of anything emanating from the Tsar's authority. Practically all of the other writers, on the contrary, urge an increase in centralization of power or control. Some point out the danger, however, that if all statistical work is placed directly under one central bureau, the special investigations by various departments may not be made in a form to meet the exact needs of those departments or may even be discontinued altogether. Several countries seem to have partially solved this dilemma by establishing a central commission of scientists which attempts the co-ordination of all studies undertaken without actually being in charge of the work.

Many of the authors comment upon the extreme difficulty of obtaining well-trained statisticians since most universities provide courses adapted merely to the training of statistical clerks rather than of statisticians.

Most of the histories are extremely valuable because of the bibliography of the statistics of the respective countries which they contain. The book is without parallel in its contents, is well edited and printed, and is a distinct credit to its authors and to the American Statistical Association.

WILLFORD I. KING.

Social and Private Life at Rome in the Time of Plautus and Terence.

By GEORGIA WILLIAMS LEFFINGWELL, Ph.D. [Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, vol. LXXXI., number 1, whole number 188.] (New York: Columbia University. 1918. Pp. 140. \$1.25.)

THE present study clearly sprang from the desire to use more extensively than has hitherto been customary the comedies of Plautus and Terence for a delineation of contemporaneous Roman society. The range of topics treated is broad even if not quite complete. The collection of material, for which the specialist should be grateful, is extensive, although unfortunately not exhaustive. The presentation is clear and gives evidence of unusual independence of judgment. Finally, the author does well to call attention to a very difficult problem about which,